

**WE CLAIM:**

1           1.     A vacuum manifold for interchangeably accommodating a multi-  
2 well plate and one or a plurality of individual chromatography columns terminating in  
3 male portions of male-female-type air-tight manually engageable connectors, said  
4 vacuum manifold comprising:

5                 a plate perforated with a plurality of through-passages, each  
6 through-passage having embedded therein a female portion of said male-  
7 female-type air-tight manually engageable connector;

8                 a plurality of individually removable plugs, each said plug shaped  
9 to mate with one of said female portions to form a substantially air-tight  
10 closure of said through-passage; and

11                a receptacle with an open top and a port for drawing a partial  
12 vacuum in said receptacle, said receptacle containing means for supporting  
13 said plate across said open top.

1           2.     Apparatus in accordance with claim 1 in which said means for  
2 supporting said plate across said open top is a shoulder encircling said open top along an  
3 inner edge of said open top.

1           3.     An adapter for a vacuum manifold, which manifold is designed to  
2 produce vacuum-induced flow through all wells of a multi-well laboratory plate, said  
3 adapter rendering said vacuum manifold usable for producing vacuum-induced flow  
4 through one or a plurality of individual chromatography columns terminating in male  
5 portions of male-female-type air-tight manually engageable connectors, said adapter  
6 comprising:

7                 a plate whose lateral dimensions are substantially the same as those of said  
8 multi-well laboratory plate, said plate having a plurality of through-passages, each  
9 through-passage having embedded therein a female portion of said male-female-  
10 type air-tight manually engageable connector; and

11                a plurality of individually removable plugs, each said plug shaped to mate  
12 with one of said female portions embedded in said plate to form a substantially  
13 air-tight closure of said through-passage.